

WASHINGTON DAILY
NEWS

NEGLECTED RUNNING WAR TO PLAY GOLF

Alanbrooke Diary Hits Ike on the Bulge

LONDON, Oct. 31 (UPI)—Field Marshall Viscount Alanbrooke charged in wartime diaries that just before the near-disastrous Battle of the Bulge Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was on the golf links at Rheims "entirely detached and taking practically no part in running the war."

Viscount Alanbrooke said that bad planning by Gen. Eisenhower led to the famous battle.

In Washington, the White House had no comment on the diaries made public yesterday.

The wartime chief of the British General Staff was sharply critical of Eisenhower but praised Gen. Douglas MacArthur as "the greatest general and best strategist that the war has produced."

The diaries were sure to open new debate on the conduct of the war in Europe as has happened every time one of the top men who participated in the Allied operation has published his opinions.

Viscount Alanbrooke said that Gen. Eisenhower lacked leadership and after time to his job in the crucial months following the breakout in Normandy and this brought on a serious crisis in the American high command.

Just before the Battle of the Bulge, Viscount Alanbrooke wrote, there was a "very unsatisfactory state of affairs in France, with no one running the land battle."

"Gen. Eisenhower, tho supposed to be doing so, is on the golf links at Rheims, entirely detached and taking practically no part in running the war."

Gen. Eisenhower at the time had his headquarters on a golf course outside the French city.

DELEGATION

Affairs got so bad, according to the British commander, that a deputation of American and British generals went to see Gen. Eisenhower "to tell him that he must get down to it and run the war, which he said he would."

Viscount Alanbrooke's severe criticisms of Gen. Eisenhower's wartime leadership were made in "Triumph in the West," the second of a two-volume series by British historian Arthur Bryant based on Viscount Alanbrooke's war diaries and autobiographical notes. It will be published Monday. The last book was "The Turning of the Tide."

A few weeks after the incident at Rheims, the stalemate on the Western front was broken by the desperate German offensive in the Ardennes Forest, the Battle of the Bulge.

The Germans hit the Americans where they were weak and pushed out.

According to Viscount Alanbrooke, was because of Gen. Eisenhower's decision to attack on a broad front instead of making a concerted, powerful thrust into Germany.

CLOSE

When the Germans had a little more success, Viscount Alanbrooke wrote a year after the war, "Antwerp might have been seriously threatened. That (the Germans) did not achieve this success is, in my opinion, mainly due to (Field Marshal) Montgomery. (German Field Marshal Gerd von) Rundstedt's command of his armor, their discipline and organization."

and to land force elements, so far as they were available. Gen. Eisenhower was tempted by the prospect of his plan."

The great strategic fight of that time between the American and British was over the Eisenhower concept that there should be a broad attack into Germany. The British, and Montgomery in particular, wanted one powerful thrust.

DENIAL

Viscount Alanbrooke denied that Eisenhower said that the British staff chief finally approved Gen. Eisenhower's strategy.

In Gen. Eisenhower's book, "Crusade in Europe," Viscount Alanbrooke was quoted as saying, "Thank God, Ike, you stuck by your plan. You were completely right, and I am sure if my fear of dispersed effort added to your burden."

Viscount Alanbrooke said this was a misquote.

"To the best of my memory," he wrote, "I congratulated him heartily on his success and said that as matters had turned out, his policy was now the correct one. . . . I am quite certain that I never said to him that we were completely right, as I am still convinced that he was completely wrong."

He wrote that just before the Battle of the Bulge Gen. Eisenhower "explained his plan which contemplated a double advance into Germany, north of Rheims and by Frankfurt. I disagreed flatly with it, accusing Ike of violating the principles of concentration of force, which had resulted in the greatest victories."

SMITH CRAISED

Viscount Alanbrooke had no respect for Gen. Eisenhower's deputy, Lt. Gen. Walter Bedel Smith, as he did for Lt. Gen. Smith "who executed the designs of Eisenhower's strategy, and I felt satisfied that he would use his influence to guide him."

Viscount Alanbrooke said Gen. Eisenhower was good at coordinating the Allies but failed when it came to sound military strategy.



Lord Alanbrooke in 1943